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ABSTRACT

The Williamsburg Charter Foundation is a group a leaders from business, academic, political, and religious communities concerned about the importance of the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty in public life and about the ability of people to live together in a spirit of civility despite deep religious differences. This document is a summary overview of the highlights and central features of the "First Liberty" Summit, the centerpiece event of the Williamsburg Charter project. This report includes the program, the public pledges, and a keynote address from the ceremony at which the Williamsburg Charter, a document celebrating and reaffirming religious liberty for citizens of all faiths or none, was signed by 15 signers representing 9 key fields in U.S. life as well as 6 prominent faith communities. These signers stood for many other persons who also signed or endorsed the document. Reprints of several newspaper articles describing the event, as well as letters of appreciation from a broad range of religious and other organizations, are appended. (DB)

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Report on

THE "FIRST LIBERTY" SUMMIT

June 24-25, 1988
Williamsburg, Virginia

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Report on

THE 'FIRST LIBERTY' SUMMIT

June 24-25, 1988
Williamsburg, Virginia

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Report
of

THE "FIRST LIBERTY" SUMMIT

Williamsburg, Virginia
June 24-25, 1988

by
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation

A celebration and reaffirmation of the First Amendment Religious Liberty clauses on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of Virginia's ratification of the U. S. Constitution and call for a bill of rights.

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Report
of
THE "FIRST LIBERTY" SUMMIT
Williamsburg, Virginia
June 24-25, 1988

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

The "First Liberty" Summit was the centerpiece event of the Williamsburg Charter project. It came in the middle of a series of five events, following the release of the national public opinion survey and the National Symposium at the University of Virginia and preceding the civic forums and the release of educational material.

Behind all the distinction of the participants, the interest of the events and the myriad of organizational details, the two-fold purpose of the Summit was simple: to celebrate America's "first liberty" through a spectacular but substantive commemoration of Virginia's call for a bill of rights in June 1788; and to reaffirm this generation's commitment to that "first liberty" through the presentation and public signing of the newly drafted Williamsburg Charter.

PARTNERSHIP IN COMMEMORATION

The first plans for the Summit were devised in the fall of 1986 by Dr. Os Guinness and Mr. John Seel, even before the incorporation of the Foundation. The Foundation first approached the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in December 1986 for permission to use the historic area of Colonial Williamsburg. That same month it also applied to the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U. S. Constitution to be an officially recognized project.

Positive responses were given to both requests in January 1987, after which preliminary planning and discussion went forward steadily between the Foundation and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Senators Ted Stevens and Dennis DeConcini, both Bicentennial Commissioners, joined the Foundation as early Trustees -- Senator Stevens being instrumental in the beginnings of the project and Senator DeConcini in its official recognition.

The next year was spent in selecting and establishing the major participants in the project -- the Board of Trustees under the chairmanship of the Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald, the Staff, the Academic Consultants, the Media Advisory Board and the "First Liberty" Leadership Circle of donors -- as well as in working on the earlier programs such as the public opinion survey and the National Symposium, all aimed at establishing and demonstrating the feasiblity of the project as a whole.

The fourth and vital member of the partnership entered the scene in February 1988, when the Board of Directors of Mutual of America, under their Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Mr. William J. Flynn, made the decision to become the principal sponsor of the "First Liberty" Summit. They brought with them, in turn, the support and expertise of their public relations firm, the Washington office of Rogers & Cowan.

Those primarily responsible for the planning and execution of the Summit were:

The "First Liberty" Summit Committee
- Mr. William J. Flynn, Chairman and Trustee
- The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, the Williamsburg Charter Foundation
- Mrs. James A. Baker III, Trustee
- Mr. August A. Busch III, Chairman of the Board, Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc.
- Senator Mark O. Hatfield (R-Oregon), Trustee
- Mr. Philip M. Klutznick, Honorary President, B'nai B'rith; Trustee
- Mr. Charles R. Longsworth, President, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

On behalf of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation
- Mr. Robert G. Kramer, Communications Director
- Mr. Thomas E. McWhertor, Special Events Coordinator

On behalf of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
- Mr. Norman G. Beatty, Vice President for Media and Government Relations

On behalf of Mutual of America
- Mrs. Mabel Brandon, President, Rogers & Cowan, Washington
- Ms. Diane Gingold, Vice President, Corporate Cultural Affairs, Rogers & Cowan, Washington

SPONSORSHIP AND SUPPORT

In addition to principal sponsorship of the "First Liberty" Summit by Mutual of America, sponsorship of different parts of the program was also provided by other corporations and foundations:

The Grand Finale Banquet and the entertainment by Ms. Barbara Cook was sponsored by the Anheuser-Busch Companies, Inc. and their Chairman, Mr. August Busch III, represented at the Summit by Mr. Stephen Lambright.

The International Guest Roundtable was made possible by a grant from the Luce Foundation and its President, Mr. Henry Luce III, who was present for the weekend.

The International Fulbright Scholars' Program was administered by the James Madison Foundation and made possible by a grant to that foundation by the United States Information Agency, which was represented by Dr. Robert Smith.

The photographic coverage and record of the Summit was made possible through Eastman-Kodak, represented at the Summit by Mr. Robert Clemens and Ms. Carol Hillageer.

The ceremonial pen used at the Signing Ceremony, as well as the commemorative pen sets given to each signer, were donated by Parker Pen U.S.A. Limited.

GUESTS

The response to the invitations to the "First Liberty" Summit was excellent, with 81 signers of the Charter agreeing to be present in Williamsburg, along with nearly 500 acceptances as guests of the Summit, 16 as guests of the International Roundtable, 23 as guests of the Fulbright Scholars Program, and 23 as participants in the International Visitors Program. A team of 30 volunteers was especially critical to the success of the Summit. Instantly recognizable in their red Summit shirts, their enthusiasm and friendly service eased a thousand problems and created an atmosphere at once personal and professional.

WEATHER

The weather for Friday, June 24, and Saturday, June 25, was both remarkable and a topic of widespread comment. Despite elaborate rain plans, it was evident by Thursday that the chief threat to the Summit was heat, not rain, with temperatures soaring into the nineties and humidity high -- a serious threat to platform participants and guests at large.

Almost miraculously, the temperature dropped on both Friday and Saturday to a cooler low eighties for the Signing Ceremony. Temperatures soared again on Sunday -- after the formal ceremonies -- bringing thunderstorms and torrential rain, which would have washed out the Tattoo and Fireworks if they had come 24 hours earlier.

§

Following is a summary overview of the highlights and central features of the weekend, the program, public pledges and keynote address from the Signing Ceremony.

MAIN PROGRAM
June 24, 1988

Opening Reception and "First Liberty" Banquet

7:00 p.m. Reception, The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center Garden
8:00 p.m. Dinner, The Virginia Room, Williamsburg Lodge

With wonderful weather, the beautiful outdoor setting and strong numbers, the opening reception launched the weekend in the best possible way. The semi-formal receiving line, led by the Honorable and Mrs. Alonzo L. McDonald and Mr. and Mrs. William J. Flynn, allowed a blend of new introductions and easy circulation that augmented the spirit of excitement which was evident from the beginning.

For the "First Liberty" Banquet, the Virginia Room was decorated festively in red, white and blue, a setting which matched the purpose of a truly American celebration. This theme was introduced in the public welcome by the Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and by Mr. Charles R. Longsworth, Chairman of the Board of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. It was expanded in the effective historical vignettes, acted by the Colonial Williamsburg Players between courses, and deepened by the international contrasts introduced in the after-dinner program.

The Irish narration, "Too Many Saviors" dramatically interpreted by Mr. Wintley Phipps, the poetry readings by Soviet dissident Irina Ratushinskaya and assisted by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, videotaped greetings from Professor Elie Wiesel and an address by Ms. Camelia Sadat were particularly moving. The opening evening, therefore, which concluded with an introduction to the purpose of the project by the Executive Director, Dr. Os Guinness, provided a kaleidoscope of insights and images that threw light on the importance of the First Amendment in American history and sharpened the purpose of the weekend.

June 25, 1988

Early Signings

8:00 - 9:30 a.m., Saturday morning
Courthouse

The tranquil stillness of Duke of Gloucester Street was broken early Saturday morning by a military drum roll from the steps of the Courthouse on Market Square. In a commanding voice, the Williamsburg Town Crier announced to the gathering crowd each person who had come to sign the Williamsburg Charter. In turn, the signers came to a small signing room where they were greeted by Mr. William J. Flynn and the Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald. Outside the signing room hung the framed archival copy of the Williamsburg Charter, which will be displayed in the Courthouse until September 1988.

First-Day Stamp Presentation
9:45 a.m., Saturday morning
Capitol, South Lawn

After an introduction by the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Eric Sevareid, veteran CBS broadcaster, the first issue of a commemorative stamp was presented by Senior Assistant Postmaster General David Charters, who gave a brief address. Pierre Mion, the artist, was introduced and comments were given by Mr. Charles R. Longsworth, President of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

The platform party included, from Virgina, Congressman Herbert Bateman of the First District; Mr. John Hodges, Mayor of Williamsburg; and Dr. Paul Verkuil, President of the College of William and Mary.

Freedom Concert by "Peter, Paul and Mary"
10:20 a.m. Capitol, South Lawn

By the time "Peter, Paul and Mary" were introduced the audience (which was made up of invited guests and the general public) had swelled to at least 5,000 (with the UPI estimate being 8,500). No one was disappointed. The music of the legendary folk singers spanned the generations and included classics from the sixties ending with the popular folk song, "If I Had a Hammer." The skills and zest of the trio were as fresh as ever, and the depth of their commitment to freedom of conscience brought an emotion to the celebration which raised it beyond the level of the purely formal and celebratory.

The Official Signing Ceremony of the Williamsburg Charter
11:00 a.m. Capitol, South Lawn

The full text of the script, remarks and keynote address of the Signing Ceremony is included in this report. Its impact needs to be experienced to be felt. (A videotape of aspects of the Signing Ceremony is available from the Foundation.) But three common responses perhaps point to the reason for the profound impression made by the event.

First, due largely to the charge issued to the Signers by Senator Mark O. Hatfield, the Chairman of the Nominations Committee, the signings demonstrated dramatically that the signing of the Charter was not simply a matter of a set of ideas, but an act. Responsibilities were set out. Public commitments were given. Something happened. A compact was entered solemnly.

Second, for many of those present, the ceremony illuminated the importance of the first principles of religious liberty in a way no speech, discussion or reading could ever. The purpose of the project, which for many had remained abstract or had been glimpsed only in fragments, suddenly became real.

Third, the combination of bicentennial occasion, historic setting and strong, diverse national leadership -- in a ceremony which touched hearts and minds equally -- left many people with a sense of inspiration which surprised them. (As one Jewish leader expressed it, "I admit that after many years of Church-State affairs, I came to this weekend jaded and cynical. To my surprise, I was inspired; I would even say 'exalted.'")

In addition to the program participants listed in the text of the ceremony, the platform party included Mrs. James A. Baker III, Mrs. William J. Flynn, Senator Ted Stevens, former Senator Charles Percy, Congressman Jim Slattery and Ambassador Richard Schifter.

The Charter Luncheon

Following the Signing Ceremony, all guests of the Summit were escorted by the Fife and Drum Corps to a tented luncheon on the lawn of Bassett Hall, the former home of John D. Rockefeller, benefactor of Colonial Williamsburg. With no program of speeches or music planned, guests enjoyed a delicious seafood luncheon, served under lazily turning fans, and were afforded the chance for good conversations in a relaxed atmosphere.

Closing Receptions and Grand Finale Banquet

6:15 p.m. Carter's Grove Plantation
6:30 p.m. North Gallery, Williamsburg Lodge
7:30 p.m. The Virginia Room, Williamsburg Lodge

Saturday evening opened with a double reception, the first in the North Gallery of the Williamsburg Lodge and the second -- by special invitation from the President of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation -- at the Carter's Grove Plantation. Guests were conveyed to the latter by buses, and few will forget the quietly stunning elegance of the house and the lawn with its vista stretching down to the James River.

Both sets of guests were at the Williamsburg Lodge for dinner, where the Virginia Room was decorated in a profusion of green and white suggesting the gaiety of a garden party, complete with a gazebo.

There were no speeches, though the Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald, in a remarkable tour d'horizon, expressed the gratitude of the Foundation to a myriad of people and organizations whose commitments, endeavors and generosity had made the project possible.

Following 20 minutes of entertainment from the acclaimed Broadway singer, Ms. Barbara Cook, banquet guests were escorted by the Fife and Drum Corps to the Military Tattoo and Fireworks Extravaganza on Palace Green.

Colonial Williamsburg's largest fireworks display ever was complemented by the music of four bands, a vocal ensemble and Bruton Parish Church organ. The Tattoo was a spectacular display of sight and sound that brought the official Summit to a thrilling finale and left many to walk home in the warm June night with minds full of memories.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

International Guest Roundtable

Under the leadership of former Senator Charles H. Percy, a distinguished group of 15 international guests gathered for private discussions on the place of religious liberty as a basic human right in the modern world and some of its benefits and costs in public life. The Roundtable participants included six ambassadors to the United States, one British Member of Parliament, the U. S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and the Chairman of the Soviet Commission on Human Rights. With Dr. Michael Novak of the American Enterprise Institute and Professor David Martin of the London School of Economics serving as guides, the group spent two lively sessions exploring the fundamental human question, "How do we live with each others' deepest differences?"

Fulbright Scholars Program

At the suggestion of Charles Z. Wick, Director of the United States Information Agency, plans were made to invite international students from countries torn by religiously-grounded strife. Each was a Fulbright scholar specially selected by the Institute of International Education. In attendance were students from Indonesia, South Africa, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sierra Leone, Zaire, Kenya, Japan, Burundi, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Burma, Israel and Ecuador.

The program began Friday noon with a keynote address, "The Continuing Experiment" by Pastor Richard John Neuhaus, a drafter of the Williamsburg Charter. The Forum included presentations by Professors William Lee Miller and James Davison Hunter of the University of Virginia. On Saturday the students interacted with a panel on the topic, "Religion in American Political Life." Panel members included Mr. Robert J. Brown, The Honorable Stuart E. Eizenstat, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend and George S. Weigel, Jr.

International Visitors Program

USIA, as part of its "Living Constitution" Program, brought to the Summit 23 international guests, most of whom are scholars and political leaders from the developing world.

The expertise of those present, focused on this issue in such a setting, led to a discussion that was as intense as it was constructive. For the Foundation, Congressman Jim Slattery and Rabbi Alan Mittleman spoke on the importance of the First Amendment. Dr. George Gallup, Jr. addressed the "Changing Composition of American Religion" and Dr. Os Guinness spoke on "Living with our Differences: America and the World." The Chairman was Richard T. Burress, Trustee and Associate Director of the Hoover Institution, Palo Alto, California.

"First Liberty" Tour

Many of the Summit guests enjoyed the opportunity to take a two-hour walking tour specially created by Colonial Williamsburg for the "First Liberty" Summit. It focused on the places, personalities and events that shaped the thinking of those who framed the Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776, who issued the call for a federal bill of rights in 1788, and who ultimately supported the adoption of the First Amendment in 1791. Patriots George Wythe, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason and James Madison were discussed.

A "First Liberty" Capitol Evening

This dramatic interpretation featured Thomas Jefferson as the host for visitors in the halls of the Capitol. In each of three stages, this participatory program featured Jefferson, Madison, Edmund Pendleton and others engaging each other and modern visitors in debates and votes on the Virginia Declaration of Rights, which helped carve Virginia's place in history as the cradle of religious liberty.

Public Lecture

A public lecture was given by Professor William Lee Miller, acclaimed author of *First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* and the booklet released especially for the "First Liberty" Summit, *Williamsburg: Cradle of the First Liberty*. He spoke on "Virginia's Legacy: America's Religious Liberty."

CONCLUSION

A great part of the work of the project is finished, and a great part remains to be done. Achieving its wider goals now means expanding the circle of national leaders committed to the Charter, as well as taking the Charter to the nation at large. Plans for this are underway, including a nationwide series of city forums and the production of a high-quality documentary film and educational material.

Yet overall, both as an event in itself and as a springboard to further tasks, the "First Liberty" Summit was a stunning success which exceeded the expectations of almost all the organizers and participants. The stature and diversity of those taking part, the national importance of the issue and the commitments made, the historical significance of the setting and the occasion, the beauty of the weather, the smoothness and success of the program and planning, the spirit of the participants -- such factors made for a most memorable weekend and one that could be historic for the future of religious liberty in America.

Photos by Ken Bennett

Charter signing

Thousands of spectators were on hand to witness the signing of the Williamsburg Charter, a document to renew the country's commitment to freedom of religion and the separation of church and state. More than 100 dignitaries were on hand for the signing. Clockwise from above: Alonzo L. McDonald, chairman of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, signs the charter. Rev. Billy Graham, who recently returned from a trip to Russia, was the keynote speaker. Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., participates in an international roundtable discussion with Dr. Abdallah Bonhabib, ambassador from Lebanon. Peter, Paul and Mary conduct a sing-along during their freedom concert. Siobhan Dunphy, 3, finds a comfortable seat for the concert on her mother's lap, while a colonial soldier maintains his post.

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THE SIGNING CEREMONY

THE SIGNING AND PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF THE WILLIAMSBURG CHARTER

THE CAPITOL,
WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA
JUNE 25, 1988

WELCOME

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

The Commonwealth of Virginia is ringing with a double celebration today -- the 200th anniversary of Virginia's ratification of the Constitution and stirring call for a federal bill of rights.

The first of those decisions was significant because of Virginia's size and preeminence in the revolutionary cause. But it is overshadowed by the second because New Hampshire had made the decisive ratification three days earlier on June 22, 1788.

The call for a bill of rights was far more fateful. Echoing down the years, it was amplified in our Bill of Rights, and then picked up in different voices as in France's Declaration of Rights in 1789, the United Nations Declaration of Rights in 1946 and the constitutions of newly emerging nations.

But we also reach backward in time today, and that is why we are in Williamsburg. For behind the call in Virginia 200 years ago, and behind even the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia 12 years earlier, was Virginia's Declaration of Rights which was enacted in May 1776 in the Hall of the House of Burgesses behind us.

If the United States Constitution has "Virginia written all over it," of no part is that more true than the Bill of Rights, and of no part of the Bill of Rights more than the Religious Liberty clauses of the First Amendment which flowed from Article XVI of the Virginia Declaration.

So we are here to celebrate that call and especially the first 16 words of the First Amendment to which it led. Virginia is the "mother of disestablishment." Williamsburg is the cradle of our religious liberty. We have come to its chief source to celebrate and reaffirm our nation's "first liberty."

First on our program, we are honored by the issuance of a stamp commemorating the ratification. I call on Mr. Charles R. Longsworth, President of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

[The Stamp Ceremony follows, ending with music from the Fife and Drum Corp.]

FREEDOM CONCERT

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

We come now to the eagerly anticipated Freedom Concert. There are times when freedom has no voice -- rarer times when its enjoyment is so secure that it needs none, and darker times when its suppression is so severe that it has none.

But mostly, the cry for freedom can never be silent, whether it issues in anger or sorrow, protest or prayer. And wherever its voice is heard, there is a group renowned for its commitment to swelling that cry.

Ladies and gentlemen, join me in welcoming a legendary folk trio, a group loved by Americans of all generations, known and admired for their commitment to the cause of freedom around the world -- Peter, Paul and Mary.

[The Freedom Concert]

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

Thank you. You should all know the extraordinary lengths to which Peter, Paul and Mary have gone to be with us. The distances they often sing of in Woody Guthrie's "This Land Is Your Land" are the very distances they have crossed to take part. Last night they were on the "red-eye" from San Francisco, and this afternoon they will be on their way back there. Our special thanks to them.

We now begin the Signing Ceremony.

[Special music as the Platform Party enters and are seated.]

SIGNING CEREMONY

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

We come to commemorate that freedom which is our nation's "first liberty" -- religious liberty, or freedom of conscience. And we do so with due deliberation and care through the public signing and public presentation to the nation of the Williamsburg Charter. This is a newly drafted document

that celebrates and reaffirms religious liberty in American public life on the eve of our third century under the Bill of Rights.

The Williamsburg Charter declares that religious liberty is a precious, fundamental and inalienable right -- for citizens of all faiths or none. It is our nation's "first liberty" for logical and historical reasons, and it undergirds all other rights and freedoms secured by the Bill of Rights.

No part of the Constitution is more distinctive. Few parts have been more decisive. The Religious Liberty clauses of the First Amendment represent the most important political decision for religious liberty and public justice in history. As much if not more than any other single provision in the Constitution, the Religious Liberty clauses hold the key to American destiny.

Today, almost 200 years after their enactment, they stand out boldly in a century made dark by state repression and sectarian conflict. Yet the ignorance and contention now surrounding the clauses are a reminder that their advocacy and defense is a task for each succeeding generation.

That is the resolve of those who sign the Williamsburg Charter today: that through their commitment to the Charter, commemoration of this vital freedom can go beyond celebration to rededication in our time.

Ladies and gentlemen, to lead us in singing the Star Spangled Banner, Mr. Wintley Phipps from our neighboring state of Maryland.

[National Athem follows.]

A Time to Remember

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

America is a curious blend of the dynamic and conservative. We Americans know the difference between tradition as the living faith of the dead and traditionalism as the dead faith of the living. One key to that difference is the vitality of memory. For Americans, remembering is not purely a matter of scholarship, and it is a far cry from nostalgia and idle reverie. It is as we remember the history that led up to our own, and remind ourselves of human experiences elsewhere in the world, that the differences that make America America stand out to us as more precious and alive.

First, let us remember those men and women to whom we owe this heritage, those pioneers in thought and deed who saw, struggled and secured the freedoms we enjoy.

To bring us a dramatic vignette of the Framers, Mr. John Hamant of Colonial Williamsburg....

[Vignette follows.]

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

The two greatest dangers to religious liberty in the 20th century have been sectarian violence and state repression. If the death toll from sectarian violence runs into the millions, the number of those who have died under state repression runs into tens of millions. It is our immense privilege to have with us Irina Ratushinskaya. A fine poet and a women of great courage, Irina was sentenced to seven years in jail as a prisoner of conscience, first writing those poems with match sticks on bars of soap and then smuggling the poems out to her husband through fellow prisoners who learned them by heart as messages of truth and hope.

Ladies and gentlemen, with Kathleen Kennedy Townsend to help her read the poems in English, Irina Ratushinskaya....

Irina Ratushinskaya:

Ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to belong to the third generation of the Soviet prisoners of conscience. Most of us died behind bars. I was lucky to survive, and after this experience I can assure you that it is much more convenient to enjoy the freedom given to us than to struggle for this freedom. I am going to read now two poems for which I was sentenced to seven years of hard labor camp and five years of internal exile. But I have to warn you that, according to Soviet law, if I am guilty, if I am reading these poems, you all are guilty if you don't run to the KGB immediately afterward to inform the KGB of all that you have heard. So you have a couple of minutes to think about it and go home if you are not going to be in danger. Well, if you don't want to go home let us start.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend:

And we remain in place on dreadful chessboard squares
All of us prisoners, our coffee smells like burned letters
And post offices smell like opened letters
City blocks are death
And there is no one there to shout DON'T!
And the chiseled faces on facades have their eyes shut
And every night, birds are flying away from the city
And blindly, our dawns drenched with light
WAIT
Is it just a dream
Could it be?
But in the morning, newspapers hit the street.

Irina Ratushinskaya:

(If in Russia, this same poem would sound a little bit more dangerous)

[Poem read in Russian]

The other poems I am going to read to you are dedicated to all Russian poets who could not survive, who died in the Soviet labor camps, psychiatric hospitals, and exiles.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend:

We elude the translator's phrasing
What is verse?
The aroma of hazy rings exhaled by a cigarette smoker
But no poisonous fumes will drift over bluish grasses
A thing, live and buoyant
So in order of something burning spells the genuine
Such a notion is widely accepted
Before battle begins, an unshredded banner waves in the field
Still untested, then the tattering starts
Grant protection, Lord,
The people behind cannot be volted having hair with the smoky favorites
This is fate with unchanging power
Just as banners, in Russia, poets are expected to come under
firing to win spots on lists which are final.

Irina Ratushinskaya:

[Poem read in Russian]

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to let you know, not only the poets in our country consider the freedom of the whole nation much more important than their own lives.

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

Down through the years the Constitution has not always included all Americans -- especially Blacks and women. No such charges have been leveled against the Religious Liberty clauses, though there have been occasions when their protections have been overridden or imperfectly applied.

To remind us, as the Framers knew well, that "nothing human can be perfect" we hear remarks from a distinguished Baptist pastor, an accomplished lawyer and the eminent Executive Director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks.

Dr. Benjamin Hooks:

Williamsburg in Virginia, as some colonists referred to this community, has known many a distinguished company in its long history. Here in the Capitol, the taverns, the classrooms and student haunts of the College of William and Mary gathered men who were to cast a long shadow across the early history of this infant nation.

Here in Williamsburg were shaped the ideals and attitudes that set the early course of the nation. So it is an honor and pleasure to come to this old and historic city to join with you in the ceremony surrounding the signing of the Williamsburg Charter, an effort to define anew the import of our Constitution's attachment to religious liberty.

As you know, this is the 200th anniversary of Viriginia's call for a bill of rights. Virginia, of course, already offered the nation the example of its own Declaration of Rights, authored by George Mason. Central to that Declaration, as to the concepts that emerged from the federal bill of rights, was an understanding of the role of religion in public life.

In Virginia's Declaration, Mason wrote, "No free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles."

In my view, neither Mason nor James Madison, who had so large a hand in the federal bill of rights, intended to promote an establishment of religion. And while no one wanted a theocracy, I doubt also that they intended to exclude thought informed by religious views from the public debate.

My own experience is illustrative. I am a lawyer who has been a state court judge and a member of a federal regulatory commission. As a lawyer and an office holder, I have sworn before God and the citizenry to honor and preserve the Constitution of the United States, including the proscription of a religious establishment. At the same time, I am a Christian minister, and what is also important, a member of a racial minority within the United States. The God I serve teaches me that I should make no peace with oppression and that discrimination codified in law is a civil wrong, and that I must speak my notion of right and truth to the civil order.

Much of the civil rights protest came out of religious attitudes, Bible-based beliefs in human dignity and individual freedom. And it is no accident that men like Martin Luther King, Jr., who led the civil rights struggle, used the old songs of

the Black church as a reaffirmation in their belief that God would intervene in history to set his children free.

I believe that it is perfectly consistent with the First Amendment and to the nation's commitment to pluralism, which I share, to express political views that have taken roots in the soil of religious belief.

As we look back on the history of this great nation, we know that its ringing declaration of freedom and justice have not always applied to all people. We need no dramatic announcement from revisionist historians to remind us of this fact. But the important thing is that the pronouncements were made, they were uttered, they were printed, they were written and finally in the providence of God and the fullness of time, they became a ringing reality in our lives.

So, I salute this Foundation on its efforts to restore civility to the discussion of public issues. Passion has its place in politics, but passionate denunciations of all with whom we disagree do little to promote either understanding or progress.

I close with these words: "This is the land where hate should die. No feud of fate, no spleen of race, no deeply brooding fear should try beneath our flag to find a place. Then let us purge from poison to thought that service to the state we give, and so be worthy as we ought of this great land in which we live." Peace. Power.

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

Let us sum up this time of remembering by standing for a solemn moment of silence.

I ask you to remember the countless victims of bigotry and persecution.... To remember the boldness and sacrifice of those pioneers who made our freedom possible.... To remember our children and our children's children and our responsibility to them.... Ladies and gentlemen, a moment of silence.

[Moment of Silence follows.]

A Time to Reaffirm

We now turn to reaffirm our commitment to religious liberty for all through the signing and presentation of the Williamsburg Charter.

The Charter has been drafted for this occasion by a group representing America's leading faiths, writing in close consultation with political and religious leaders, and scholars and activists concerned with this issue.

The purpose of the Charter is simple: to celebrate the uniqueness of the First Amendment, to reaffirm religious liberty for citizens of all faiths or none, and to set forth the guiding principles by which citizens with deep religious differences can contend robustly but civilly with each other in our public life. In this way we will be able to sustain a constructive understanding of these principles in this generation.

More than 100 distinguished Americans from many fields of life have already agreed to sign the Charter, 75 being present with us today. Among those who have agreed to sign, but could not be here, so have signed in Washington earlier this week are:

Chief Justice Rehnquist
Retired Chief Justice Burger
Senator Bob Dole
Governor Michael Dukakis
Frank Fahrenkopf
and Paul Kirk.

I will, first, ask all the Signers who are here to stand. Senator Mark O. Hatfield, the distinguished senator from the state of Oregon and Chairman of the Nominations Committee will ask the Signers carefully to answer three questions.

Senator Mark O. Hatfield:

We sign this Charter in an age when words come easily, often mean little and bind few people.

But I remind you that we Americans are a people to whom the idea of consensus has been important, and for whom consensus is founded on the principle of compact as much as on compromise.

I therefore ask the signers to stand and publicly affirm their commitment to some of the first principles of religious liberty. **[Signers stand.]**

1. Do you affirm that religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, is a precious, fundamental and inalienable right that is the right of citizens of all faiths or none? **[Signers answer: "I do."]**

2. Do you affirm that religious liberty is a universal right joined to a universal duty to uphold that right, and that therefore a right for one person is a right for another and a responsibility for all? **[Signers answer: "I do."]**

3. Do you affirm that one of America's continuing needs is to develop, out of our differences, a common vision for the common good? And that today that common vision must embrace the fact that how we debate, and not only what we debate, is critical? **[Signers answer: "I do."]**

Please be seated.

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

Thank you, Senator Hatfield.

I now call on nine Signers to sign their names, representing key fields in American life, and to stand for the other Signers.

Let me make plain in the words of the Charter itself:

"We readily acknowledge our continuing differences. Signing this Charter implies no pretense that we believe the same things or that our differences over policy proposals, legal interpretations and philosophical groundings do not ultimately matter. The truth is not even that what unites us is deeper than what divides us, for differences over belief are the deepest and least easily negotiated of all.

"The Charter sets forth a renewed national compact, in the sense of a solemn mutual agreement between parties, on how we view the place of religion in American life and how we should contend with each other's deepest differences in the public sphere."

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, its Chairman, The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald. **[McDonald signs and is seated.]**

On behalf of the "First Liberty" Summit Committee, Mr. William J. Flynn, Chairman and CEO of Mutual of America, principal sponsor of the weekend. **[Flynn signs and is seated.]**

On behalf of the Drafting Committee, the distinguished expert on church/state affairs, Richard John Neuhaus. **[Neuhaus signs and is seated.]**

Representing government, the distinguished Senior Senator from Alaska, Ted Stevens. **[Stevens signs and is seated.]**

On behalf of American business, the distinguished Chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, William S. Kanaga. **[Kanaga signs and is seated.]**

On behalf of ethnic communities and minorities, Mr. Raul Yzaguirre, President of the National Council of La Raza. **[Yzaguirre signs and is seated.]**

On behalf of American voluntary associations, the distinguished National Executive Director of the Girl Scouts, Frances Hesselbein, and the distinguished president of United Way of America, William Aramony. **[Hesselbein and Aramony sign and are seated.]**

And on behalf of America's young people, the distinguished member of the National Honor Society, Century III Leaders, Tony Ortiz. **[Ortiz signs and is seated.]**

I now call upon six further Signers to sign their names. Each has great stature as the leader or spokesman for a prominent American faith community. I remind you again that the Charter makes no pretense of any unity over religious beliefs. In the words of one scholar, the Religious Liberty clauses are not "articles of faith" but "articles of peace."

Each leader will sign his name and make a brief statement of commitment to the principles of religious liberty for all others. Please note that Archbishop Iakovos, of the Greek Orthodox Church and Archbishop John May, Archbishop of St. Louis, President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and U.S. Catholic Conference are both unable to be with us today. They have sent their representatives, and their greetings, and will sign the Charter later.

On behalf of the community which traces its heritage back to America's "first faith," Dr. Robert P. Dugan, Jr., Director, Office of Public Affairs of the National Association of Evangelicals.

Dr. Robert P. Dugan:

> This is a meaningful occasion personally, for John Robinson, first president of the House of Burgesses, was a forebear of mine. And I feel that I am on hallowed ground.
>
> But this is a momentous occasion nationally. In signing this Charter, we affirm the wisdom, yea, the genius of our Founding Fathers. Convinced that liberty was a God-given right and therefore inalienable, they saw to it that "we the people" would be free to follow conscience in matters of belief, not the dictates of Caesar.
>
> Evangelicals are the beneficiaries of religious freedom. As those who have seized it, so we share it -- not merely tolerating, but respecting the beliefs of others. We accept the responsibilty not to inflame as we exercise the right to influence public policy on the basis of religiously-informed ideas.

As we have all sung, "Our fathers' God to thee, author of liberty, to thee we sing; long may our land be bright, with freedom's holy light, protect us by thy might, great God our King." **[Dugan signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of the great traditions of mainline Protestantism, Dr. Arie Brouwer, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches.

Dr. Arie Brouwer:

It might, I suppose, be remarked that merely by standing here I am something of a symbol, that for many decades mainline Protestantism towered over the religious landscape of America.

Ladies and gentlemen, speaking today as a representative of that unofficial Protestant establishment, I might perhaps be forgiven for lamenting its passing. But I do not lament. I celebrate. I celebrate the growth pains of a new post-establishment age in the profound conviction that ultimate meaning can never be directed or dictated either by imposed authority or by legislative action or by cultural dominance.

Ultimate meaning must always be recognized as a matter of the mind and spirit. Only thus can faith be true. Only thus can the people be free. Only thus can the nation be united. Only thus can all its citizens be equal. Only thus can society be just. Only thus can the world be at peace. Only thus can God be glorified. **[Brouwer signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of the community whose independence and dissent has played a key role in the struggle for religious liberty -- Dr. James Dunn, of the Baptist Joint Committee.

Dr. James Dunn:

Roger Williams was a Baptist. The fact that he only made it for a few months does not keep us from claiming him. And we claim him because he understood and enunciated quite clearly in Little Rhodie or Rogue's Island -- because of their dissent -- that toleration was not good enough. It was then, and is now, a weasel word that sets apart the tolerators and toleratees.

Toleration was not good enough because liberty is the guarantee that's rooted not simply in some aspect of the social contract, but in a theological commitment to soul freedom.

Then one of those Baptist unregistered ministers, John Leland, who was at this place just 200 years ago, insisted on the separation of church and state as the inevitable and inextricable corollary of religious liberty. Because, you see, this First Amendment is a two-way street, protecting not only the churches, but the state from tyrannical religion as we've known it many times in history.

He insisted that "the fondness of magistrates to foster religion has done it more harm than all the persecutions ever did." And he was right.

We commit ourselves anew to soul freedom, religious liberty and its corollary -- the separation of church and state. **[Dunn signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of the largest faith community in America, the Reverend Thomas Gallagher, for Archbishop John L. May, President, U.S. Catholic Conference.

Reverend Thomas Gallagher:

It is my distinct privilege today to bring greetings from Archbishop May. As you might be aware from some of the minor press reports, he is presently chairing the Conference of Bishops meeting at St. John's College in Collegeville, Minnesota. He also sends his sincere regrets at not being able to be here, because we Catholics celebrate with everyone today, coming out of a 2000-year on-again, off-again romance with religious liberty and freedom.

We have sought it when a minority, and sometimes have not been able to share it when the majority. But it was the successful and the lived experience of the Catholic church here in the U.S. that gave unprecedented impetus to the Declaration on Religious Liberty at the Vatican Council. That declaration opened a way to new confidence in ecumenical relationships and a new straightforwardness for the relationship between the church and the world.

And so we join with all men and women of good will today, renewing our basic commitment to this fundamental right which belongs to every man, woman and child in this

country and the world. And we pledge to bring it to fruition even as it takes us to the edge of doom at times. Thank you. **[Gallagher signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of the Eastern Orthodox community which is coming to play so much more prominent a role in American life, the Very Reverend Leonid Kishkovsky.

Very Reverend Leonid Kishkovsky:

Religious freedom cannot be taken for granted around the world. Orthodox Christians know this well. Most of the societies in which they live have imposed on the Orthodox and on other religious communities discriminatory restrictions and oppressive controls.

The American Orthodox experience, lived out in the context of religious freedom and pluralism, is a unique opportunity and a difficult challenge. We give thanks both for the opportunity and for the challenge.

In pledging ourselves to a reaffirmation of religious liberty and freedom of conscience for all, American Orthodox Christians know that we are also challenged to bear witness in public life to our deepest religious and moral commitments.

The religous liberty to which we pledge ourselves is not well-served by our religious indifference or passivity in public life. **[Kishkovsky signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of the Jewish people who welcome the chance to observe their religious heritage without state interference, Samuel Rabinove, Legal Director, American Jewish Committee.

Mr. Samuel Rabinove:

I cannot think of a better way to observe my Sabbath today than to be with you here at this time. This is a truly religious experience.

American Jews share a common commitment, drawn from our painful history as an oppressed minority, to religious liberty for all. That's why the children of Abraham, philosophically at least, often tend to think of themselves also as children of Jefferson and Madison, who bequeathed to all of us

this precious legacy of freedom of conscience for people of all faiths or none.

Thanks to the First Amendment Religious Liberty clauses and to the Constitutional principle of separation of church and state, Judaism and countless other faiths have flourished in this country with a vitality and a minimum of divisiveness that are the envy of devout men and women the world over. Let's pray that we can keep it that way. **[Rabinove signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

On behalf of those faiths whose origins are within American history itself, Elder Dallin Oaks of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

Elder Dallin Oaks:

The people called Mormons have known the sting of official repression and the lash of popular fury. We endorse the need and join in this celebration and reaffirmation of religious liberty.

The Declaration of Independence has posited these truths to be self-evident: that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights and that governments are instituted to secure these rights.

The first words of the Bill of Rights provide the dual guarantees of religious liberty. The subsequent words that guarantee the freedoms of speech, press and assembly provide the means to make our liberties secure. But it is the initial guarantee of religious freedom that explains why all these other liberties are desired.

In our nation's founding and in our Constitutional order, religious liberty is the motivating and basic civil liberty. In its articles of faith, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints declares: we claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience and allow all men the same privilege. Let them worship how, where or what they may. **[Oaks signs.]**

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

And finally, on behalf of those faiths which are not Jewish or Christian, but whose growing numbers members will make them so influential in American life in the coming century, Imam Wareeth Deen Muhammad of the American Muslim community.

Imam Wareeth Deen Muhammad:

Precious souls of Americans from the past and you who are gathered here, I greet you as Muslims greet each other, "Peace be unto you." The following is given as an expression of Muslims' deep-seated support of the freedom of religion.

The Founding Fathers' classic treatment of man's worth, and American law in its Constitutional role of championing the safety of man's common and vital life and liberty, are no doubt concerns held in sacred regard by the international community of Muslims. Moreover, that our holy book, the Koran, and our Prophet, peace be upon him, Muhammad, represent for Muslims the living and enduring sources of our support for freedom of religion, is common knowledge with Muslims of all nationalities.

Therefore, it is in the spirit of man's historical, classic and universal attention to human life and freedom of religion that we humbly join the Williamsburg Charter Foundation reaffirmation ceremony. With the many races and religions of America, we cherish for all others, as we do for ourselves, the first liberty. **[Muhammad signs.]**

A Time to Reflect

Master of Ceremonies: Mr. Eric Sevareid

We turn now to a time of reflection. This morning we have remembered the pioneers whose sacrifices secured the freedoms we enjoy. We have reaffirmed our own commitment to religious liberty and freedom of conscience for all by publicly signing the Williamsburg Charter.

George Mason, the principal author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, declared within it that "No free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by...a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles."

To lead us in that by reflecting on where we are, the way we have come and what we face ahead, I call on The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald and Mr. William J. Flynn to present remarks and to introduce Dr. Billy Graham.

The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald:

I, Alonzo L. McDonald, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, do solemnly declare before this company asssembled the respectful remembrance, reaffirmation and rededication of this generation to the principles underlying the rights of religious

freedom as provided in the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights to the Constitution of the United States.

We recognize here today with grateful appreciation the conceptual genius, courage and dedication of our forefathers in confirming the inalienable right of free exercise of religion for all Americans regardless of their faiths, creeds, spiritual values or philosophies. We thank each subsequent generation leading to our own for preserving and passing along to their civil heirs this priceless freedom and for persistently broadening its application to protect all citizens of this great nation.

We reaffirm our belief in these basic values, acknowledging that freedom of choice can only exist with freedom of conscience. We further recognize the wisdom and justice of our forefathers acting resolutely in this place six generations ago in understanding that only with freedom of religion can these be meaningful expressions of values and beliefs, thereby providing the foundation stone for the subsequent freedoms of speech and press.

We further openly acknowledge the limitless diversity in beliefs and nonbeliefs in our society and take pride in the cohesion as a people that this pluralistic environment has nurtured.

Finally we rededicate our generation to this first liberty -- freedom of religion. We admit its proper place in the public debate of issues determining the course of our society. And we call for a continuing dialogue among our people to be conducted civilly and with great respect for the rights of all individuals to exercise and express the dictates of their consciences even in determined opposition to our own.

We salute the signers of the Williamsburg Charter as representatives of a people committed to the preservation and continuation of our First Liberty -- the Rights of Freedom of Religion.

Mr. William J. Flynn:

On behalf of Mutual of America, its directors, its officers, and its employees, I wish to acknowledge our great debt to those men and women of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation who presented to the nation today the Williamsburg Charter. We stand in awe of them and we stand in awe of those great citizens of the city of Williamsburg 200 years ago who inspired the first sixteen words of the Bill of Rights. We salute them, we salute their special genius, we salute their special courage. For those sixteen words were to change in a most remarkable way the

future course of history, both of our nation and of the world. We are thrilled to celebrate this day. We are thrilled to have this opportunity for reaffirmation and rededication to freedom of conscience, religious freedom for all people everywhere at all times. Thank you very much.

I have the very high honor now to introduce to you the one man on the podium who least needs an introduction. One of our nation's most gifted religious leaders, a force for good in everything to which he has set his hand. Ladies and gentlemen, the Reverend Dr. Billy Graham.

Keynote Address: Dr. Billy Graham

Mr. Eric Sevareid; my longtime friend Senator Mark Hatfield; Mr. McDonald; distinguished guests, I count it a privilege to be asked to address you today.

I have never been more consciously grateful for the priceless heritage of freedom, and particularly of religious freedom, that we enjoy. I am deeply aware of the occasion and the setting of this bicentennial celebration, and of the untiring work of many of you on behalf of religious liberty.

I have just arrived from the Soviet Union where it was my privilege to participate in the 1000 year celebration of Christianity in Russia. I was a guest of the Orthodox Church, and had the privilege of speaking a number of times not only in the celebrations, but preaching in Orthodox Cathedrals and Baptist Churches.

Just before going to the Soviet Union, my wife and I and several colleagues toured parts of China. I had the privilege of speaking at several universities, several of the newly opened churches, and was the second foreign visitor that Premier Li Peng received after his election as premier.

We had many discussions with scholars, political leaders, and religious leaders in which we discussed the very points, to some extent, that concern us here today.

Both countries are in the process of forming new laws governing religion, and hopefully granting much more freedom to religion.

I have been gone from America for sixteen weeks, and arrived here yesterday suffering from jet lag, but buoyed by what I have witnessed on journeys this year. History and travel are two of the best ways to break out of what can be a cramping

circle of the immediate and the local. Travel is a natural prompting to reflect, just as history is to remember.

You will understand, then, why both my heart and mind are stirred by the ringing themes of religious liberty.

At the same time, it's no secret to most of you that I speak both as an Evangelical and as an evangelist -- at a time when in the public eye the two are confused and both are sometimes viewed as hypocritical and corrupt. At a time, as one writer put it, when **pillars** of the church have become **columns** in the newspaper!

I leave it to you to assess what you have seen and heard of Evangelicals in the public arena. One mark of the Evangelical Community is that no one speaks for all Evangelicals. What I say is therefore only one Evangelical's viewpoint, but I suspect I speak for many Evangelicals whose voices have been less heard in recent debates and interviews.

As I just mentioned, I have come directly from the Soviet Union, and before that from China, where I have seen a new stirring among ordinary people concerned for greater liberty of conscience, and a new seriousness among officials and scholars rethinking ways of guaranteeing human rights and making constitutional freedoms a reality.

And having come here expressly to celebrate and reaffirm our nation's "first liberty", my mind is filled with a jostling crowd of images and memories tied in with religious liberty:

I think of Roger Williams, with his individualistic personality, but his passion for religious liberty as "soul freedom."

I think of John Leland, another of my pioneering Baptist forebears, whose experiences in jail up the road in Culpeper County contributed to James Madison's understanding of religious liberty as much as any influence in his thinking.

I think of spending three weeks traveling with my friend, Sidney Rittenberg, who spent sixteen years in solitary confinement in China. This experience has left his spirit unbroken. His Chinese wife was able to slip him a Bible. This book transformed his life and thinking. He is a man with no bitterness, and a man filled with love.

When American television goes to China, he usually is their translator. The first time I ever talked to him on the phone, he was the guest of Walter Cronkite in Connecticut. The

experience in prison made him love America more, and appreciate our freedoms more.

I think of people like Dostoevski who was put in prison by the Czar because he tried to help some peasants. As he went into prison, a woman handed him a New Testament. The New Testament transformed his life. He was especially taken with the fifteenth chapter of Luke which tells the story of the prodigal son. In all of his great novels you will find the thread of the prodigal son through them.

Time would fail me if I were to mention great heroes who have been touched by the story of the Bible. But I bear them in mind as an invisible audience in the gallery as I share with you thoughts on two kinds of threats to freedom of which we must be aware.

I. THE POLITICAL THREAT

One great threat to religious liberty in America today lies in the political realm, and grows out of inadequate responses to the fact of religious diversity and pluralism. It can be overcome only as we remember that the more diverse we become as a nation, the more we should make a distinction between freedom **of** religion and freedom **from** religion. Our Founding Fathers never meant that we would be free **from** religion, but we could worship God according to our own conscience, rather than have it imposed on us.

To put our challenge simply: Choice and change are a fact of life in advanced industrial societies. Which means that, as pluralism expands, so do the problems of living with "all those others." With more people in the room, it becomes harder not to step on each other's toes.

The Scots tell a story about a young Inverness boy called Hamish who left home to go to London University, his first time away from his family and homeland. His doting mother was a little uneasy about him; so, after a few weeks she took the train for London to see how her "wee laddie" was doing.

"Oh, it's fine, Mother," he assured her, "except for the neighbors. The idiot on one side keeps banging his head against the wall, and the one on that side screams into the night."

"How on earth do you stand it, laddie?" asked his mother.

"Oh, I don't do nuthin'," said young Hamish. "I just stay here where I am, quietly practicing on my bagpipes."

So the modern world continually sharpens the question: "How do we live with each other's deepest differences? How do I exercise my freedom so as not to impinge on yours, and vice versa?"

Americans, of course, are no strangers to pluralism, including religious diversity. The particular way the First Amendment guarantees **freedom for all** lies close to the secret of America. Expanding pluralism has been a major theme of the American story.

But in the last generation we have experienced yet another great thrust forward of pluralism. Pluralism in America now goes beyond the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish to include other great world religions such as Islam and Buddhism. It even goes beyond religion altogether to include a number of people with no religious preference at all.

The Framers were certainly committed to pluralism. But we may wonder if they envisaged an America with more than 2,000 Christian denominations. An America with an example of almost every religion the world has ever known -- within 50 miles of Berkeley. And an America with one state -- Hawaii -- whose Buddhist community outnumbers the Catholic, Protestant or Jewish communities. The more pluralistic we become, the more problems we are likely to face.

On the one hand, one temptation (common in some parts of the world) is to believe more strongly what one believes to the point of **contempt for the beliefs of others.** Religious beliefs and behavior then harden into absolutism and dogmatism in reaction to modern pressures.

On the other hand, the opposite temptation (more common in Europe and the developed world) is to believe ever more weakly in what one believes, to the point of the **compromise of one's own beliefs.** Religious beliefs and behavior soften into relativism and indifference. In short, unless we are watchful, the effect of strong pluralism is either to soften or to harden faith so as to endanger one's own faith or the freedom of others in theirs.

How then do we live with each other's deepest differences? This is the question this Charter attempts to answer. At least it raises a point for further discussion and debate.

The First Amendment guarantees not only **personal** beliefs and **private** worship, but "free **exercise**"! Which from the Framers onward has included such **public** activities as charity, education, medical practice, political expression, and various evangelistic activities.

Throughout our history this public dimension of the "free exercise" of religion has been a leading source of dynamism and social justice.

Religion today is often viewed as better kept in private because inevitably it poses a problem in public. But where would we be if that had been the accepted view of the past?

What would have inspired and shaped the movement to end slavery?

Or to give voting rights to women?

Where would the fire have come from for Martin Luther King's struggle for civil rights a generation ago?

It was reported that when Dr. King received his Nobel Peace Prize, someone asked him what motivated him to do the things he did. He thought a moment and said, "The evangelical preaching of my father."

While I have been away and not had opportunity to study the final version of the Charter and to think it through, my own inclination in response to the dilemma of pluralism is found and indicated by the Charter in an earlier reading of it.

I am impressed in particular by its vision of rights balanced by responsibilities, peace balanced by truth, deep religious commitments balanced by strong political civility. Only so can pluralism be kept from sliding into relativism or rebounding into dogmatism. Only so can liberty continue to march hand in hand with justice and American diversity remain a source of national strength.

Thus, the first threat can be called political, and the second is what I would call:

II. THE MORAL THREAT

In my judgment, the greatest threat to religious liberty in America today lies in the moral realm, and it also grows of inadequate responses to the fact of religious diversity and pluralism.

Freedom grows hollow if it is all negative and not positive, all rights and no responsibilities, all choices and no obligations. Eventually freedom will become so hollow that it collapses of its own emptiness.

This past generation has been a crash course in wisdom. We have witnessed a **rhetoric of liberty** slump into a **reality of license.** We have seen a series of much vaunted liberations -- such as drug-taking and sexual lifestyles -- spiral down into addictions.

One inescapable lesson is the reminder of the old but forgotten distinction between political, or "outer freedoms" -- and moral, or "inner freedom."

Outer freedoms, such as freedom of religion, speech and assembly, are necessary if freedom is to expand undistorted as it should. But inner freedom, which is a matter of character and convictions, is necessary if freedom is to exist at all or to endure for long.

We who enjoy much "outer freedom" would do well to listen to those who have had less.

Ten years ago in his commencement address at Harvard, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn warned of "the tilt of freedom toward evil" when there are no constraints against evil except law. He saw clearly that when character and convictions grow hollow and ineffectual, the result is an "inequality between the freedom for good deeds and the freedom for evil deeds."

Still living within the Soviet Union, Andrei Sakharov made the same point three weeks ago in his news conference. Asked if he **now** felt free, Sakharov replied, "Inside myself, I have always felt free, even when I was in Gorki."

Now on the outside, the author of a just-published book, Fear No Evil writes that he was a freer, simpler man in the purifying silence of an isolation cell than in the noisy frantic, distracting world in which he now lives in the West: "In the. . .cell I was a free man. . . . And now, lost in thousands of mundane choices, I suddenly realize that there's no time to reflect on the bigger questions." In some ways, he concludes, freedom "makes my life much more shallow."

In many countries I have gripped hands made strong through years of suffering, embraced hearts cleansed of the poison of resentment through suffering, and looked into eyes ablaze with an inner freedom no one can take away.

For example, we are seeing two similar and yet radical changes in two of the most powerful countries in the world.

The Cultural Revolution dragged China along the edge of hell. It only ended twelve years ago. Today, China is in the

midst of a gigantic modernization program that includes the opening of hundreds of new churches.

In the Soviet Union, the Stalin period is now being openly criticized in press and media, and "perestroika" is the watchword of the hour -- the restructuring of a great nation.

So I cannot shirk the task of passing on the warning to all of us. Where there is less political freedom in the world, great moral and spiritual freedom can still survive. Here where there is greater outward freedom, moral and spiritual freedom seems to be diminishing.

Without political and social freedom religious liberty is limited. But without moral and spiritual freedom, neither religious liberty nor any liberty will last.

In my judgment, the links between faith and freedom are so strong that this republic will only stand if we as Americans continue to believe "In God We Trust," and recognize the rights of others to worship, or not worship, as their conscience dictates.

CONCLUSION

Some cynics may say that I support religious liberty in order to be free to preach the gospel. They would be partly right.

What is true for me as an Evangelical and an evangelist is true for the followers of any faith. As the Charter says, "Rights are best guarded and responsibilities best exercised when each person and group guards for **all** other those rights they wish guarded for themselves."

One week ago, we got up early in the morning in Kiev in the Ukraine and went to the world-famous Monastery of the Caves, a beautiful ancient monastery that was being turned back to the church by the government as a symbol of a new era in church-state relations.

A crowd of some 50,000 people gathered on the hillside and stood for three hours during the Divine Liturgy. I noticed that many of them wept as the Patriarchs, Metropolitans, and Bishops hugged and kissed each other. It was the joy of anticipating a new breath of freedom.

Jesus once said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

I am aware today of the brave pioneers -- from the Pilgrim Fathers on -- who have passed a heritage on to us that we, our children, and grandchildren can enjoy.

So we here today rededicate ourselves to freedom in our time.

Let us stand for political freedom, moral freedom, religious freedom, and the rights of all Americans in a pluralistic society, and let's never give in to those who would attempt to take it from us.

A number of years after he had retired as prime minister in Britain, Sir Winston Churchill was invited to his old school at Harrow. The Headmaster told the students to bring their pencils and pads to take down the words that "Mr. History" himself would say.

He was presented, stood up, and looked around the auditorium two or three times. Then he thundered, "Never give in! Never give in! Never, never, never!" And he sat down.

[Closing solo by Wintley Phipps, followed by Colonial Williamsburg special music as Platform Party leaves.]

APPENDIX

SIGNERS OF THE WILLIAMSBURG CHARTER

Those Who Have Signed to Date
As of July 15, 1988

Representatives of the Judiciary

Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist
Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, retired

Representatives of the Congress

Senator Dennis DeConcini, D-Arizona; **Trustee;** Bicentennial Commissioner
Senator Robert Dole, R-Kansas, Minority Leader, U. S. Senate
Senator Mark O. Hatfield, R-Oregon; **Trustee**
Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-New York; **Trustee**
Senator Ted Stevens, R-Alaska; **Trustee;** Bicentennial Commissioner

Congressman Don Bonker, D-Washington; **Trustee**
Congressman Robert Michel, R-Illinois, Minority Leader, U. S. House of Representatives
Congressman James Slattery, D-Kansas; **Trustee**

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Daily Press

Celebrating religious freedom

Staff photo by DENNIS TENNANT

Billy Graham points to the Colonial Capitol on Saturday, saying that's where religious freedom in America got its start. Flanking Graham are Alonzo McDonald (left), a Williamsburg Charter Foundation trustee, and Eric Sevareid, master of ceremonies.

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The Economist
2 July 1988

An end to crusades

WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA

SOME go to war and some to law: how about a good verbal punch-up instead? At Williamsburg last weekend 100 or so distinguished Americans signed a charter, drafted by a committee of Protestants, Catholics, Jews and secularists, that laid down Marquess of Queensberry rules for religious controversy in public life. Make your case robustly, suggest the guidelines, but allow the other fellow an equal right to do so too.

Unexceptionable, you may say. But because a principle seems fair to reasonable people does not, of course, mean that it is generally observed. So this group of rather busy people gathered together to reaffirm their commitment to the 16 opening words of the first amendment to the Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Williamsburg was a fitting place in which to do it because it was there that in 1776 George Mason drafted America's first declaration of human rights and James Madison rejected the weasel concept of religious "toleration", insisting that it was a man's right to practise his own religion.

The hope of those who signed the charter is that people may be encouraged to accept diversity, not just of different religious doctrines but of the doctrines' different practical implications for everyday life, especially in educational and sexual areas where divergent views are most deeply held. Can discourse remain civilised on a subject such as abortion, which some see as a woman's choice over her body and others see as infanticide? Possibly not. The most passionately committed disputants—members of the new religious right and determined secularists—preferred not to commit themselves. Neither the Moral Majority, fearing surrender, nor the American Civil Liberties Union, fearing a hidden host of right-wing objectives, accepted the invitation to sign the Williamsburg Charter. But the Rev Billy Graham (who gave the keynote speech at Williamsburg), Mr Robert Dugan, of the National Association of Evangelicals, and Mr Robert Maddox, director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, all signed it. So did ex-Presidents Ford and Carter (though they skipped the Williamsburg party) and other illustrious men of reason.

With George Mason's blessing

The organisers cherish the hope that their notion of vigorous but polite debate may even catch on beyond America's frontiers. Some have particular interests: Mr William Flynn, whose insurance company, Mutual of America, paid for many of the events, is the son of a Northern Irish father and a southern Irish mother.

But the world has fiercer religious disputes even than Ulster's. Lebanon's ambassador was at Williamsburg and so was Iraq's, speaking of the international and the civil wars that had been generated by religious intolerance. Pakistan's ambassador spoke of the difficulties of reconciling Islam with the requirements of modern society. And the chairman of the Soviet human-rights commission spoke of the new laws on religion being created in Russia to replace the current legislation on religion, written in Stalin's day. The revised laws, he said, would allow for mutual tolerance, recognising the importance of freedom of conscience. Well, good, said the Americans, trying not to sound too smug.

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Religion

Williamsburg Charter challenges faithful to argue robustly

"Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

— First Amendment, U.S. Constitution

WILLIAMSBURG — Sometimes it takes an immigrant to this country to see what's important about America. We natives take much for granted.

Alexis de Tocqueville, who wrote two books on the young nation 50 years after its founding, was such a man. And so is Dr. Os Guinness, a British scholar who convinced members of Congress, national religious, civic and business leaders to gather in Williamsburg from June 24 to 26 to sign a brilliant report he drafted with others called "The Williamsburg Charter."

The signing took place on the 200th anniversary of Virginia's ratification of the Constitution and its call for a Bill of Rights, the first 16 words of which are quoted above. At dinner, Guinness spoke:

"As one who came here from abroad, I feel the genius of the First Amendment is its liberty with diversity. It is the most distinctive part of the American system. Many other nations have separation of powers. But no other nation has anything quite like the religious liberty clauses. ...

"We gather a group of Protestants, Catholics, Jews and secular people to celebrate the First Amendment's freedom for all faiths or no faith. In this Charter we've articulated guiding principles on

Michael McManus

how people of strong religious differencescan debate with each other robustly but civilly."

Billy Graham, fresh from weeks of travel through China and Russia, spoke at the signing. He wondered if the Constitution's framers "envisaged an America with more than 2,000 Christian denominations" or a state (Hawaii) whose majority is Buddhist. He saw two dangers to such diversity:

"One temptation is to believe more strongly in what one believes to the point of contempt for others," a hardening "into absolutism and dogmatism." Another temptation is to "compromise one's beliefs," a softening of belief into "relativism and indifference."

But Graham felt the greatest threat to religious liberty is moral. "Freedom grows hollow if it is all rights and no responsibilities, all choices and no obligations. This past generation we have witnessed a rhetoric of liberty slump into a reality of license. Much vaunted liberations — drug taking and sexual lifestyles — spiraled into addictions."

He quoted two Russians. Ten years ago Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn warned of "the tilt of freedom toward Evil." And recently, Andrei Sakharov was asked if he now felt free. Sakharov replied, "Inside myself, I have always felt free, even when I was in Gorki." Graham saw a profound paradox.

"Where there is less political freedom in the world, great moral and spiritual freedom can still survive. Here where there is greater outward freedom, moral and spiritual freedom seems to be diminishing."

What impressed Graham about the Williamsburg Charter was "its vision of rights balanced by responsibilities, peace balanced by truth, deep religious commitments balanced by strong political civility."

As the charter put it eloquently, "Rights are best guarded and responsibilities best exercised when each person and group guards for all others those rights they wish guarded for themselves."

More excerpts: "The No Establishment clause separates Church from State but not religion from politics or public life. It prevents the confusion of religion and government, which has been a leading source of repression and coercion throughout history.

"Conflict and debate are vital to democracy. Yet if controversies about religion and politics are to reflect the highest wisdom of the First Amendment and advance the best interests of the disputants and the nation, then how we debate, and not only what we debate, is critical.

Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, said the church-state conflict in 1980 and 1984 was "religion pressed into the service of the state by the religious right" such as putting prayer back into public schools which he saw as an "establishment of religion."Yet he joined conservative opponents to sign the "remarkable document."

(Billy Graham opposes government prayer in school. "But I am in favor of a moment of silence where all can pray or think about a boyfriend.")

Stuart Eizenstat, a top aide to President Carter, got involved because, he said "This is the first country in the world that has fostered a place where Jews can practice their religion freely, without a fear of persecution."

Students and teachers should study the 23-page charter. Send $1 to The Williamsburg Charter, 1250 24th St. NW, Washington, D.C., 20037. As it says, "We are firmly persuaded that the principles asserted here require a fresh consideration, and that the renewal of religious liberty is crucial to sustain a free people that would remain free."

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Los Angeles Times
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HARRISON GRAY OTIS, *1882-1917*
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In the American Experiment, Liberty of Conscience Is the First Liberty

By MICHAEL NOVAK

America's number is 1776. Often written MDCCLXXVI, this number appears over and over in American iconography. You will find it on the Great Seal of the United States (on the dollar bill). You will also find it on the tablets held by the Lady of Liberty.

On July 2, 1776, the founders of this nation broke from Great Britain. On July 4, they declared the principles behind their willingness to go to war. "We hold these truths . . . " they proclaimed. Thus, the United States has never been ideologically neutral. It is built on "truths."

America began with a creed: ". . . that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; . . . that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. . . "

When the founders said "created equal," they did not mean "created identical." The same founders also believed that each human person is unique and unrepeatable. For them, "equal" meant a subject responsible for his own actions, ward of no one. Humans are equal in rights. Each is a free person, capable of reflection and choice.

For these principles, they fought a revolutionary war. And they won. And then their experiment began to fall apart—rebellion in Massachusetts, riot in North Carolina, discontent everywhere. The founders (and all Americans) were beginning to look like the laughingstock of the world. They had complained against a mild tyranny, and now seemed incapable of governing themselves even as well as King George III had governed them. They seemed likely to reap anarchy.

Thus the Americans discovered by 1787 that a declaration of principles is not enough. A declaration of rights is not enough. To secure those rights, a government must be instituted—a government that would work.

It would have to work, moreover, for sinners. There would be no use in 1787 in designing a government for saints. Of these, any republic has too few. (And those that it has are rather impossible to live with.)

Recognition of human sinfulness is the beginning of political realism. To design an order worthy of free men and free women, one must design one that will work for sinners. On this Earth, that's all there are.

The same Creator who endowed men and women with unalienable rights made them in his image. Like their Creator, all humans are meant to be creative.

The two key creative activities are reflection and choice. Reflection: to look again, to consider, to examine alternatives. Choice: to single out a course of action and to lay hold of it. These are the basic capacities of free persons.

Alexander Hamilton caught this point when he wrote in the very first paragraph of Federalist I:

"It seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force."

In choosing an image for God on the Seal of the United States, the founders chose an eye: symbol of candor, conscience, light. The alert eye is the discerner of alternatives, the detector of possibilities, the organ of enterprise. And above the all-seeing eye, they wrote: "*Annuit Coeptis* (Providence) smiles on our undertakings."

The God of Judaism and Christianity is the God of conscience. Conscience is what humans have most in common with him: light and liberty.

In the American experiment, therefore, liberty of conscience is the first liberty. Humans have dignity because they can reflect and choose. These are the first two imperatives of American life. Reflect. Choose.

Under the American regime, the unreflective life is not worth living. It is, so to say, un-American, a falling off from the American idea.

Under the American regime, not to choose but merely to drift is also to be less of a citizen than one ought to be, less responsible, less brave, less free.

Last week there took place in Williamsburg, cradle of the proclamation of religious liberty in Virginia, the public signing of a new "Williamsburg Charter" on religious liberty. The charter is an important document, not least because it swings emphasis from the negative "no establishment" clause of the First Amendment to the positive "free exercise" clause. It is the latter that gives conscience its creative power. This is a crucial step forward for our time.

Reflect and choose. Liberty of conscience is the first liberty, from which all others flow. No established authority can acquit this responsibility for any one of us. The heart of American citizenship lies in the "free exercise" of one's own capacity for reflection and choice.

Michael Novak is a theologian and author who writes a column in Washington.

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Sunday, June 26, 1988

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Reaffirming Founding Truths

By Os Guinness

TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO this weekend, the Commonwealth of Virginia changed the course of human history by demanding a written declaration of human rights as a condition for ratifying the U.S. Constitution. Virginia's bold gambit led to the adoption of a Bill of Rights that guaranteed religious liberty for all people, all faiths.

The importance of this event cannot be overstated. Religious liberty — the right to express the convictions of a free conscience — is the foundation for all other freedoms, including free speech and a free press.

Religious liberty is also the key to our continued enjoyment of these freedoms. History plainly shows that with religious control over government, political freedom dies; with political control over religion, religious freedom dies. For two centuries the Bill of Rights has helped the United States avoid both perils.

James Madison, the Virginian who drafted the amendments to the Constitution that became the Bill of Rights, addressed the relationship between Church and State in the opening lines of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." These clauses established America's "first liberty" and set our nation safely apart from the political and sectarian strife that bled civilizations past and continues to bleed modern-day societies in Lebanon, Ulster and elsewhere.

In terms of principle (upholding the inalienable right to a free conscience) and [illegible]

'Virginia hosts an event that could have a lasting affect on public understanding of, and attitudes toward, the role of religion in American society.'

society to cope with its deepest internal differences and to turn diversity into a source of national strength), the Religious Liberty clauses of the First Amendment have proved to be a triumph for public justice. Yet there is a striking absence today of any national consensus about religious liberty as a positive good. Indeed, the mention of religion in public life sparks intense, contentious debate.

THIS WEEKEND, Virginia has been hosting an event that could have a lasting affect on public understanding of, and attitudes toward, the role of religion in American society. More than 100 leaders from the United States and other countries around the globe have gathered in Williamsburg for the "First Liberty" Summit to salute the enduring relevance of our Religious Liberty provisions and sign the Williamsburg Charter. Composed by representatives of America's leading faiths and secularists, the Charter reaffirms the importance of religious liberty to the success of our republic and lays out guidelines for debate on the place of religious beliefs and freedom of conscience in the public arena.

While acknowledging their deep and continuing diff[illegible]

affirm the following principles and guidelines:

• Religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, is a universal right joined by a universal duty to respect that right. A society is only as just and free as it is respectful of this right for its smallest minorities and least popular communities.

• The two Religious Liberty clauses address distinct concerns, but together they serve the same end — freedom of conscience for citizens of all faiths or none.

• The clause prohibiting laws to establish religion separates Church from State but not religion from politics or public life.

• The clause prohibiting laws to restrict free exercise guarantees the right to reach, hold, exercise or change beliefs freely. It allows all citizens who so desire to shape their lives, whether public or private, on the basis of personal or communal beliefs.

• Conflict and debate are vital to democracy. Yet if controversies about religion and politics are to reflect the wisdom of the First Amendment and advance the best interests of the nation, then how we debate, and not what we debate, is critical.

In many ways, Colonial Virginia is the birthplace of America's greatest prodigy — religious liberty. As our religious and public leaders return to Williamsburg to further the growth and development of that prodigy, citizens in Virginia and across the country should give the principles of religious liberty fresh consideration.

A reaffirmation of such founding truths is crucial to sustain each new generation of free people who would remain free.

([illegible] director of the Williamsburg

'Williamsburg Charter' Finds 100 Signers

'Religious liberty' captures broad support

WILLIAMSBURG, Va.—This colonial capital didn't wait until the Fourth of July for a fireworks extravaganza this year. It got the jump on the rest of the nation by celebrating June 25. Pyrotechnic displays attracted thousands to the palace green for the climactic event of a weekend focusing attention on religious liberty.

The formal signing of the Williamsburg Charter, a document designed to give the United States—and the world—a new appreciation for the religion clauses in the Bill of Rights, took place here June 25 because that was the 200th anniversary of Virginia's ratification of the Constitution as well as its commitment to getting amendments that would include freedom of faith.

Again and again during the celebration, attention was focused on the 16 words unique to the American First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

Principal speaker Billy Graham, just back from four months overseas, including participation in the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in the Soviet Union, summed up the conviction of many participants: "I have never been more consciously grateful for the priceless heritage of freedom and particularly of religious freedom, that we enjoy."

Os Guinness, the British subject who has directed the foundation which framed the charter, declared in his keynote address at the opening day's banquet that anyone from abroad would recognize that the genius of the U.S. system is in the religion clauses of the Constitution. He added, "No other nation has anything quite like it."

Graham was joined on the platform at the signing ceremony by representatives of a cross section of American society—politicians, business leaders, young people, academics, executives of voluntary organizations, and prominent religious figures. Watching the official participants in the event were thousands of others, some of whom attended expressly to be a part of the day's festivities and others who were simply tourists in Virginia's restored colonial capital during the weekend.

Even though he delivered the main address at the ceremony in front of the capitol building, Graham himself did not sign the charter. He disclosed in his speech that he read an early draft but had not been able to study the final version since returning from overseas. Guinness told *World* after the program that the evangelist had explained to him that he was accountable to a board and that its executive committee would need to approve before he signs. (Graham had been back in the country only three days when he spoke here.)

If the famed preacher does add his signature, he will be one of many expected to do so during the balance of this year. Leaders of the foundation did not issue a final list of signers but said that they expect more to agree by December 31, when the organization plans to close its doors and go out of business. Already, more than 100 of those invited to do so have endorsed it, and the total may run to 200.

Some of the signers who were unable to schedule trips to the Williamsburg event went to the U.S. Capitol in Washington to affix their signatures earlier in the week. Included were Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole of Kansas, Phyllis Schlafly of the Eagle Forum, and Albert Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers.

Among those scheduled to sign later are former Presidents Ford and Carter.

Adding their names to the document on the platform before Graham spoke were such diverse religious personalities as Robert Dugan of the Washington office of the National Association of Evangelicals; Dallin Oaks, apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later-Day Saints (Mormons); W. D. Muhammad of the Muslim American Community Assistance Fund; James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee in Washington; Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches; Samuel Rabinove, legal director of the American Jewish Committee; and representatives of the Greek Orthodox archbishop and of the president of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

More than 50 other signers were on hand in Williamsburg and appeared at ceremonies earlier in the day at the courthouse to endorse the 28 page charter. They included constitutional lawyer William Bentley Ball, a specialist in church-state issues and a drafter of the document; former Congressman John Buchanan, chairman of People for the American Way; Samuel Ericsson, executive director of the Christian Legal Society; Stuart Eizenstat, domestic policy chief in the Carter White House; pollster George Gallup Jr.; Wallace Jorgenson, chairman of the National Association of Broadcasters; Senator Mark Hatfield; Robert Maddox, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State; and Ernest Lefever, president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Organizers also announced that Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, who has sewed up the Democratic presidential nomination, has signed, as has former Chief Justice Warren Burger. No announcement has been made about involvement of President Reagan or Vice President Bush.

The charter foundation is a voluntary, nonprofit, nonpartisan body. Those who have endorsed its document have done so as individuals, and the charter will have an impact only to the degree that they exert their leadership to implement its provisions.

"We who sign this charter," says a concluding section, "people of many and various beliefs, pledge ourselves to the enduring precepts of the First Amendment as the cornerstone of the American experiment in liberty under law."

They committed themselves to "speak, write and act according to this vision and these principles" and to "urge fellow citizens to do the same."

The signers acknowledge that the charter does not have the force of law but is a compact, "a promise that must proceed freely from us." Nevertheless, they say they are "firmly persuaded that the principles asserted here require a fresh consideration" since "the renewal of religious liberty is crucial to sustain a free people that would remain free."

Graham stressed in his message that America's "first liberty" was always intended to encourage religious expression. He declared, "Our Founding Fathers never meant that we would be free from religion, but we could worship God according to our own conscience, rather than having it imposed on us."

The evangelist said that in a pluralistic society the tendency is to either soften or harden one's faith "so as to endanger one's own faith or the freedom of others in theirs." While he encouraged a balanced approach, he emphasized that it is not necessary to compromise one's beliefs. To the contrary, he pointed out numerous cases in which the free exercise of religion "has been a leading source of dynamism and social justice" in American history.

Graham cited the preaching in Williamsburg of Great Awakening evangelist George Whitefield more than two centuries ago. The spiritual and moral awakening called for in the 18th century are also needed now, he noted. The 20th Century's best

Alonzo L. McDonald (center) is the first to sign the Williamsburg Charter during the formal signing ceremony in front of the restored colonial capitol at Williamsburg, where Virginia's representatives called for amendment of the Constitution to insure religious liberty. Standing at right is Eric Sevareid, the veteran broadcaster who was master of ceremonies, and at left is John Seel, administrative director of the charter foundation. McDonald, chairman of the Avenir Group Inc., is chairman of the foundation board. [KEN BENNETT PHOTO]

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Witnessing the Williamsburg Charter signing are Billy Graham (right), the principal speaker, and William J. Flynn, chairman of the "First Liberty Summit" weekend at Williamsburg and chief executive officer of Mutual of America, the insurance company which was corporate sponsor of the event. (UPI)

known evangelist indicated that moral collapse is as great a threat to continued enjoyment of American liberties as any political effort to curtail them.

Each generation must take up the torch, he suggested: "So we here today rededicate ourselves to freedom in our time. Let us stand for political freedom, moral freedom, religious freedom, and the rights of all Americans in a pluralistic society, and let's never give in to those who would attempt to take it from us."

Sitting beside Graham on the platform was Russian poet Irina Ratushinskaia, a visible reminder of the difference in freedoms in the United States and in other nations. She served a prison term in the Soviet Union for expressing her faith before an international campaign (largely directed by British Christians) effected her emigration. Her readings were offered in English by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, a trustee of the foundation and daughter of the late Robert F. Kennedy.

Another guest at the Williamsburg events was the chairman of the new Commission of Human Rights in the Soviet Union, Feodor Burlatskij. He was part of an international roundtable that included ambassadors from several nations and leading figures in the worldwide campaign to extend liberty. Burlatskij told reporters in a briefing after closed-door sessions of the roundtable that new legislation is being drafted in the Soviet Union to improve the lot of believers. He said he was told by a leading Russian Orthodox primate recently that 88 churches had been opened (or re-opened) in the past year or so.

Also present for the roundtable was Richard Schifter, the ranking State Department official charged with monitoring human rights developments. He cautioned that while new laws are being planned in the Soviet Union, the old repressive laws are still on the books.

The meeting of international visitors was one of several auxiliary events taking place during the "First Liberty Summit." There were also seminars for academics and for foreign students.

Preceding the formal signing ceremony in front of the capitol was a concert by folk signers Peter, Paul and Mary. The evening fireworks display at the palace concluded a military tatoo featuring four musical groups. Handel's "Fireworks Music," commissioned by King George II, was played by the bands as rockets burst over the mansion in which the king's governors lived.

—A.H.M.

> In the last generation we have experienced yet another great thrust forward of pluralism. Pluralism in America now goes beyond the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish to include other great world religions such as Islam and Buddhism. It even goes beyond religion altogether to include a number of people with no religious preference at all.
>
> The Framers (of the Constitution and Bill of Rights) were certainly committed to pluralism. But we may wonder if they envisaged an America with more than 2,000 Christian denominations. An America with an example of almost every religion the world has ever known—within 50 miles of Berkeley. And an America with one state—Hawaii—whose majority is Buddhist, not Christian or Jewish. The more pluralistic we become, the more problems we are likely to face.
>
> *—Billy Graham at the Williamsburg Charter signing ceremony*

Williamsburg Charter's Summary of Principles Released as Leaders Gather for "First Liberty" Summit

An official summary of the principles of the charter begins with the religion clauses of the First Amendment—"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof"—and then makes these ten points:

1. Religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, is a precious, fundamental and inalienable right. A society is only as just and free as it is respectful of this right for its smallest minorities and least popular communities.

2. Religious liberty is founded on the inviolable dignity of the person. It is not based on science or social usefulness and is not dependent on the shifting moods of majorities and governments.

3. Religious liberty is our nation's "first liberty," which undergirds all other rights and freedoms secured by the Bill of Rights.

4. The two religious liberty clauses address distinct concerns, but together they serve the same end—religious liberty, or freedom of conscience, for citizens of all faiths or none.

5. The no establishment clause separates church from state but not religion from politics or public life. It prevents the confusion of religion and government which has been a leading source of repression and coercion throughout history.

6. The free exercise clause guarantees the right to reach, hold, exercise or change beliefs freely. It allows all citizens who so desire to shape their lives, whether private or public, on the basis of personal and communal beliefs.

7. The religious liberty clauses are both a protection of individual liberty and a provision for ordering the relationship of religion and public life. They allow us to live with our deepest differences and enable diversity to be a source of national strength.

8. Conflict and debate are vital to democracy. Yet if controversies about religion and politics are to reflect the highest wisdom of the First Amendment and advance the best interests of the disputants and the nation, then *how* we debate, and not only *what* we debate, is critical.

9. One of America's continuing needs is to develop, out of our differences, a common vision for the common good. Today that common vision must embrace a shared understanding of the place of religion in public life and of the guiding principles by which people with deep religious differences can contend robustly but civilly with each other.

10. Central to the notion of the common good, and of greater importance each day because of the increase of pluralism, is the recognition that religious liberty is a universal right joined to a universal duty to respect that right. Rights are best guarded and responsibilities best exercised when each person and group guards for all others those rights they wish guarded for themselves.

Richmond Times-Dispatch

Sunday, June 26, 1988 | Richmond, Virginia 23219 | 138th Year, No. 178 ★ $

Leaders from right, left sign charter on religious rights

By Ed Briggs
Times-Dispatch religion writer

WILLIAMSBURG — Religious, civic and business leaders yesterday paid homage to a new document designed to end the growing discord in America between the right and left in religion and hailed a new day of religious accord.

They came to sign the Williamsburg Charter, a 7,200-word document that, in essence, says religious rights are balanced by responsibilities to respect the ideas of others.

The festivities involved workshops, an international round table on religious freedom, and yesterday's formal signing of the charter by leaders ranging from the right to the left in politics and religion.

The Rev. Billy Graham, who was not a signer because he returned from a four-month trip to China and the Soviet Union three days ago and was not able to study the document, struck all of the themes of the charter in his keynote address to about 2,000 people outside the Colonial Governor's Palace. The crowd had thinned from the estimated 3,000 there earlier for a brief concert by the folk group Peter, Paul and Mary.

Mr. Graham, who turns 70 this year, said, "One great threat to religious liberty in America today lies in the political realm and grows out of inadequate response to the fact of religious diversity and pluralism."

The inadequate response, he said, "can be overcome only as we remember that the more diverse we become as a nation, the more we should make a distinction between freedom of religion and freedom from religion. Our Founding Fathers never meant that we would be free from religion, but we could worship God according to our own conscience, rather than have it imposed on us."

Mr. Graham, who during the last four decades has become an accepted religious figure for all denominations, touched on the changing face of American culture during the last generation because of an influx of previ-

Continued on page 8, col. 1

Staff photo by Masaaki Okada

NEW ISSUE — A commemorative stamp drew crowds in Williamsburg, with some collectors traveling from hundreds of miles away. (Story, page C-1.)

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Religious rights document hailed

Continued from first page

ously unseen faiths: "In the last generation we have experienced yet another great thrust forward of pluralism. Pluralism in America now goes beyond the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish to include other great religions, such as Islam and Buddhism. Further than that, it includes people who have no religion."

He said the greatest threat to religious liberty is a decline in a common morality once dictated by religious beliefs. "We have witnessed a rhetoric of liberty slump into a reality of license. We have seen a series of much-vaunted liberations, such as drug taking and sexual lifestyle, spiral down into addictions."

He said that unlike the "outward freedoms" guaranteed by the First Amendment, the "inner freedom" of Americans — matters of character and convictions — "is necessary if freedom is to exist at all or to endure for long."

He suggested that Americans take a lesson from those in other nations who suffer for their convictions, yet continue to cling to them. Those people, he said, "have great moral and spiritual freedom."

The signing of the charter was the highlight of a two-day event that included renting large areas of Colonial Williamsburg for meeting and housing guests and two banquets.

Williamsburg Charter Foundation officials, who say they are bankrolled by grants from major corporations and foundations for various activities, including a nationwide poll this spring, say they can't say how much the entire celebration will cost by the end of a series of regional discussions on religious liberty is completed next year.

Lesso L. McDonald, chairman of the board of the Avenir Group Inc. and chairman of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation, said figures on the cost of the Williamsburg celebration won't be known by auditors "for a couple of weeks."

William J. Flynn, chairman of the board of Mutual of America, which is funding several foundation projects that which paid for a major part of the Williamsburg celebration, said his company has taken the foundation's work on as an educational project that will result in publications for schools and a public television production.

He declined to say how much money his company has authorized for the project.

Part of the two-day gathering included an "international round-table" discussion, from which the public was excluded, on religious liberty. Those on the panel included representatives from the United States and the Soviet Union.

Dr. Feodor Burlatskij, chairman of the Soviet Commission on Human Rights and a participant, said during a news conference yesterday that his nation is drafting legislation "that will radically change the role of religion in society and increase the role of the church to strengthen morality in the country."

He said the proposed law will be based on a concept that "there are no human rights without freedom of conscience."

While about 100 people signed the document, not all were at yesterday's ceremonies. Those who weren't there, but who signed earlier, included Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist; his retired predecessor, Warren Burger; and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass. Michael S. Dukakis, Democratic front-runner for the presidential nomination, signed Thursday night in Washington, foundation officials said. Neither President Reagan nor Vice President George Bush signed, officials added.

Among religious leaders signing yesterday were Dr. Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches; Dr. Robert P. Dugan Jr., director of public affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals; Imam Warith Deen Muhammad, head of the American Muslim Community; the Rev. John Buchanan, chairman of People for the American Way; Rabbi Samuel Rabinove, legal director of the American Jewish Committee; Elder Dallin H. Oaks, an apostle of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; Dr. James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs; and Dr. Robert Maddox, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State. Imam Muhammad is the son of the late Black Muslim leader Elijah Muhammad.

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Commission on the Bicentennial of The United States Constitution

808 17th Street, N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006
202/USA-1787

June 29, 1988

Warren E. Burger
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Obert C. Tanner
Strom Thurmond
Ronald H. Walker
Charles E. Wiggins
Charles Alan Wright
Mark W. Cannon
Staff Director

The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald
Chairman and President
Avenir Group Inc.
5505 Corporate Drive Suite 100
Troy, Michigan 48098

Dear Mr. McDonald;

I would like to express my gratitude and that of the Commission for the wonderful events surrounding the signing of The Williamsburg Charter at the "First Liberty Summit".

A seer once said, that "out of small things proceedeth that which is great." The events which led to The Williamsburg Charter support this saying. It shows what can happen when a few people with perseverance, resourcefulness, and an idea set things in motion.

The Charter is unprecedented in bringing together vast religious diversity in a written and verbal affirmation of unity behind the "first liberty," our right to religious freedom.

The entire Summit was spectacular, and it was obviously very well planned. This celebration must easily be one of the most important and original achievements to come out of the commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution thus far. It was a special pleasure and privilege to be part of it. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark W. Cannon

MWC/ss

The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation
Williamsburg, Virginia 23187

Office of the President

July 1, 1988

Dear Os:

The "First Liberty" Summit is now a new and important page in our history, and I want to express my personal thanks to you for bringing this exceptional series of events to Williamsburg.

Many people worked together to make the summit a success, and I believe the several events provided both education and pleasure to the invited guests and the general public, as well as to the participants involved.

The concept of the program came off very well, I felt, from the International Roundtables to the closing Grand Tattoo and Fireworks. And, as you undoubtedly envisioned, the various events gave our countrymen and the international guests something to think about and be thankful for.

Thank you for bringing this outstanding event to Williamsburg, and best wishes for continued success as you undertake other projects in the name of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation.

Sincerely,

Chuck Longmont

Mr. Os Guinness
Executive Director
Williamsburg Charter
1250 24th Street NW
Washington, D. C. 20037

National Headquarters
Washington, DC 20006

American Red Cross

Richard F. Schubert
President

June 28, 1988

Dear Bill:

It was, indeed, a grand, but even more importantly, a great occasion. I believe that you will someday look back and feel like you were a significant part of a change operation in which people across the country were forced to look more closely at our greatest and most fundamental liberty and reaffirm their commitment thereto. I thank you for making it possible for Red Cross and me personally to be a part and also for the beautiful memento of the Summit. Please know of my admiration for you and Mutual and my hope that our friendship will continue to grow across the years.

Sincerely,

Dick Schubert

Richard F. Schubert

Mr. William J. Flynn
Chairman
"First Liberty" Summit Committee
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
1250 24th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20037

National Association of
NAB
BROADCASTERS

Wallace J. Jorgenson

Chairman of the Board
1771 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 429-5449
Telex: 350-085

July 12, 1988

Mr. Alonzo L. McDonald, Chairman
Board of Trustees
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
1250 Twenty Fourth Street, N. W.
Suite 375
Washington, D C. 20037

The First Liberty Summit, Mr. McDonald...

...was an inspiring and memorable experience. Mrs. Jorgenson and I are deeply grateful to you, the Williamsburg Charter Foundation and Mutual of America for making it possible.

We were present for the events from beginning to end and really wished it could have continued because we were enjoying it so thoroughly. It was also a delight to see so many long-standing friends there, especially Eric Sevareid and Billy Graham.

Thank you again for allowing us to attend and participate in such a stirring series of events as the First Liberty Summit.

Best regards.

Sincerely,

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FROM: PATRICK CORMACK FSA MP

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

5th July, 1988

Hon Alonzo L.McDonald,
Chairman,
Board of Trustees,
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation,
1250 Twenty Fourth Street, N.W.,
Suite 375, Washington DC 20037.

Dear Mr. McDonald.

It is really quite impossible to thank you adequately for your warm welcome, and gracious hospitality, during two of the most delightful and fascinating days that I have had for a very long time.

The Summit was a thoroughly memorable occasion in every way and I felt very privileged to be there, and particularly to be able to take part in the round table.

Thank you so much for everything - including that very thoughtful gift which will be a treasured memento of the Summit.

With warmest good wishes.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Cormack

p.s. I do hope that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you over here before long and do please let me know when you next plan to be in London so that I can return your hospitality.

109 Grandview Avenue
White Plains, NY 10605

July 6, 1988

Dear Ed -

Just a note to express our appreciation for having been invited to participate in the First Liberty Summit, a most memorable occasion!

That this occasion was so successful is a tribute to you and your dedicated staff, in particular, Bob Kramer and John Seal. Putting it all together so beautifully was a tremendous accomplishment. You have good reason to be proud.

Sincerely -

Sam and Anne Rabinove

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

The Council of the Twelve
47 East South Temple Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84150

June 28, 1988

The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
1250 24th Street, N.W.
Suite 375
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Mr. McDonald:

As one of the participants in the "First Liberty" Summit last week in Williamsburg, I express my appreciation for that important event and for the excellence of the Williamsburg Charter.

As a life-long student and scholar of what we call "Church and State" in this country, I consider this a history-making event with great positive prospects for our nation and all its people. It was carried out in a highly professional and expert fashion, and with appropriate consideration for the interests of all.

Please accept my commendation, congratulations, and gratitude for all concerned.

I enjoyed meeting and visiting with you, and hope we get to see one another again.

Sincerely,

Dallin H. Oaks

va

1988

The Christian Science Board of Directors

June 29, 1988

Mr. Alonzo L. McDonald, Chairman
Board of Trustees
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
1250 Twenty Fourth Street, N.W., Suite 375
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Mr. McDonald:

If it were possible to find a combination of sixteen words equal in eloquence to those opening words of the First Amendment, I would use them here to thank you. What you and your remarkable colleagues have accomplished over the past two years is truly magnificent.

We are grateful to be included in the Williamsburg Charter and to have been invited to share in the celebration.

All through the weekend I found myself deeply touched by how timely and significant this rededication to religious liberty is--to all who shelter under the Constitution--to all who are blessed by its influence--and to our own Church.

Gratefully,

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Lewis Selover
Chairman

UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
Department of Education
1312 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005 (202) 659-6718

Office of the Secretary

June 30, 1988

Mr. Robert G. Kramer
The Williamsburg Charter Foundation
1250 24th Street, N.W., Suite 375
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dear Bob:

I want to share my thanks with you, Sharon, Tom, Os and all your associates for all you did to facilitate my representation of Archbishop May at the Williamsburg Summit on June 25th. Everyone was so kind and caring in plugging me into the morning's events.

The morning program was also most enjoyable. But more than that, it was inspiring. I know I left Williamsburg grateful for our freedom and keen on renewing my familiarity with the history of our nation.

And so, thanks again for a truly invigorating experience. You can all be proud.

Gratefully,

Tom Gallagher

Rev. Thomas G. Gallagher
Secretary for Education

TGG:nsr

JUL 01 1988

BAPTIST JOINT COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC AFFAIRS
200 MARYLAND AVENUE, N.E., WASHINGTON, D. C. 20002-5797 202/544-4226

JAMES M. DUNN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 4, 1988

Dear Bs:

Thanks for an excellent experience at Williamsburg.

I knew you were "doing it right." I was not prepared, however, for the powerful emotional impact of the setting, the vignettes, the persuasive pluralism, the words of the founders.

You deserve great credit for doing a difficult job against great odds. And a Brit, at that...

Sincerely,
James

JUL 06 1988

CHRISTIAN LEGAL SOCIETY

Mailing: P.O. BOX 1492
MERRIFIELD, VA 22116-1492
Street: 4208 EVERGREEN LANE, SUITE 222
ANNANDALE, VA 22003
(703) 642-1070

June 29, 1988

The Honorable Alonzo L. McDonald
Avenir Group, Inc.
5505 Corporate Dr.
Suite 400
Troy, MI 48098

Dear Al:

Thank you for your outstanding leadership as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Williamsburg Charter Foundation. The work accomplished by the Foundation has been already, and accurately, described in superlative terms. I believe we witnessed history being made at Williamsburg, in the way we should want it made.

As director of the Center for Law and Religious Freedom, I can assure you that we are fully committed to the substance and goals of the Williamsburg Charter. We are vitally interested in its national recognition and its permanent place in history.

I hope you will visit us when you come to Washington. We would love to welcome you to our new facility and share lunch together, perhaps with the Foudation's leadership team, Os, John and Bob. I am particularly interested in your thoughts about how we who work full time in this field can build upon the Foundation's fine work.

Cordially,

Mike

Michael J. Woodruff, Esq.

MJW:kjr